

Resources and Support

We have a right to resources that are directed towards sexually exploited children and youth and our very diverse needs.

“Suicide lines don’t know how to deal with the issues we deal with. They can’t cope with our reality.”

“The prostitutes in my country are very young and have no place to sleep. They sleep on the streets and this is when the men take advantage of them and rape them.”

Recommendations

Prevention

Mentoring programs must be established for potentially vulnerable children and youth. Information about resources where sexually exploited children and youth can find assistance and support needs to be accessible.

Harm Reduction

Safe and adequate housing must be available for sexually exploited children and youth, where there is proper support in terms of health and emotional well-being and practical support including life skills, educational and vocational training.

Crisis Situation

All governments must take responsibility in establishing 24 hour help lines working in conjunction with crisis intervention services and outreach teams.

Healing and Connecting

The healing process involves finding the source of the problem. This takes time and long term consistent support from caring individuals including counselors and experiential peer supports. Safe environments need to be created where this can take place.

Advocacy and Public Attitudes

We want the right and the means to report people who abuse us. Governments and officials must commit to the issue of sexually exploited children and youth and provide funding and support for front-line workers and advocates.

Gender Issues

As children and youth, we are all vulnerable to sexual exploitation whether male, female, or transgendered.

“I am turned away by prostitute agencies, I am turned away by the gay community, I am turned away by my friends and family because I am not only selling my body, but I am a guy and selling my body to guys. It’s not fair.”

“It is just as scary to think of young boys being equally vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation.”

Recommendations

Prevention

Sexually exploited children and youth must have the opportunity to access resources regarding sexuality and sexual abuse. Educational programs must be developed to be implemented in schools, churches, social services, and other community centers.

Harm Reduction

Community and government action must be taken to support safer sex education as well as more effective policing of areas where male and transgender sexual exploitation takes place.

Crisis Situation

Sensitivity training for police, service providers, crisis phone line operators and other professionals regarding the sexual exploitation of children and youth, whether male, female or transgendered, must be developed and implemented.

Healing and Connecting

There is a need for governments and communities to support the development of peer-led support groups that focus on sexuality issues, exploitation issues and gender issues for young men. There is also a need to support us in identifying gay and transgendered adult role models or mentors in order to help in the development of healthy visions and views of the gay and transgendered community.

Advocacy and Public Attitudes

There is a need to recognize that not all males or youth who are exploited are gay or bisexual and to ensure that there is a voice for straight children and youth who are sexually exploited.

Legislative Action

Our laws must protect us as sexually exploited children and youth and no longer punish us as criminals.

“It shouldn’t be O.K. to beat us up just because we are prostitutes.”

“For the children, we have to ask for harsher punishment of the pimps, bad dates and others who hurt us.”

Recommendations

Prevention

Children or youth who are at high risk for sexual exploitation must be identified by those with authority and ability to intervene. Networking systems between service care providers must be utilized in order to prevent children “slipping between the cracks”.

Harm Reduction

Legislation must be passed for the prosecution of all those who buy, sell, facilitate or profit from the sexual exploitation of children and youth, whether directly or indirectly.

Crisis Situations

Prosecution of exploiters must not be dependent only on the testimony of the abused child or youth. The legislative process must protect the child and youth from further exploitation and trauma.

Healing and Connecting

Decriminalization of children and youth who have been exploited sexually is crucial to both the recovery process and their ability to connect, or reconnect, to society.

Advocacy and Public Attitudes

- Laws should reflect the belief that the sexual exploitation of children and youth is abuse. Governments must take on the responsibility of ensuring that sexually exploited children and youth are not prosecuted, but rather protected.
- Severe penalties must be imposed on all those profiting from the sexual exploitation of children and youth so that exploitation is no longer profitable. Penalties must include seizure of assets and monitoring of all financial activities. All moneys from such penalties should then be directed towards victims of these crimes.

Accountability

You will notice the difference in structure for Accountability. A delegate from South America wrote the following piece based on our belief that:

We are all responsible for our children and youth, yet the issue is not ours alone. Governments, communities and society as a whole must be held accountable for the sexual exploitation of children and youth.

The different model represents how diverse the issue of the sexual exploitation of children and youth is. No one answer will solve this global problem as it needs to be worked on by not only the global community, but national and local communities as well. It represents how we all have a part to play in working towards the solutions.

Below you will find a very descriptive and unique approach to the recommendations. Please listen to the youth of the world, our voices are our path to prevention, reducing harm, dealing with crisis situations, healing, and advocating for ourselves.

***“ Child and youth prostitution is a
reflection of the disease in society’s soul. ”***

***“ Many of us disappear without a trace.
No one knows what happens to us when we die. ”***

***“ A child is murdered and no one cares because she is a prostitute.
Society’s hands are just as bloody as the guy who did it. ”***

Recommendations

The Responsibilities of Our Governments

“Our governments must find ways to stop the countries of the world from banning the import of artisan products. By doing so this would lessen the poverty and the sexual exploitation of children and youth. Our governments must insist that the police be less violent towards sex workers and sexually exploited children. They must help us and believe in us.

There should be politicians who advocate on our behalf. People who understand that we are as worthy as everyone else.

Also that there be social support for our families.

The wealthy must not judge us just because they have a lot. They must not let happen what is happening to us.

And I wish that for one minute - for just one minute - that they would put themselves in our place so they could understand and realize that we are people.

That they think of helping and not judging.

Society is the reason that children and youth are in the streets. It is why we are sex workers or children of the streets. It discriminates against us. Instead of helping, it pushes us further into sexual exploitation."

Specific to the levels of government, recommendations are:

- **Local Community**

Communities must develop a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary action plan implementing this Declaration and Agenda. Sexually exploited children and youth must be included in both the development and implementation of all efforts to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth.

- **National**

Governments must be obligated to provide bi-annual reports detailing their progress and efforts to address and eliminate the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth.

- **Global Communities**

An international multi-disciplinary, multi-faceted monitoring committee must be structured which includes visible participation of sexually exploited children and youth.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are designed as a starting point to assist the Provincial Government, agencies, and community organizations to begin the important work of responding to the girls, boys, women, and men who are sexually exploited or vulnerable to exploitation, and those who are working in the sex trade:

A. Setting the Direction

1. **Provincial Cabinet:** develop and adopt a Cabinet mandate to address the issues related to sexual exploitation, including prevention, enforcement, interventions, and supports.
2. **Ministers' Committee:** establish a cross-departmental committee. Membership would include, but not necessarily be limited to, the Women's Policy Office; Justice; Child, Youth and Family Services; Health and Community Services; Education; Human Resources, Labour and Employment; and Innovation, Trade and Rural Development. The work of the committee would include, but not be limited to, the following activities:
 - Review policies, programs, services, and legislation to assess the harm or the potential harm they may cause individuals vulnerable to sexual exploitation
 - Develop an integrated and collaborative cross-departmental approach to identifying and responding to issues related to sexual exploitation
 - Provide information to the Cabinet
3. **Collaborative Working Committee:** establish and resource a collaborative committee comprised of relevant government departments and agencies, members of the Coalition Against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth, the RNC, and the RCMP. The committee would be mandated to:
 - Develop directions for the work required to address the needs of those who have been exploited or are vulnerable to exploitation, including prevention, enforcement, interventions, and supports based on best practices
 - Provide information to the Ministers' Committee, government departments, agencies, community organizations, and the police

3. The Justice System

4. Sexual Exploitation Education and Training: educate the police, prosecution, and judges about sexual exploitation, sexual assault, and human trafficking, and further develop skills necessary for identifying, interviewing, and responding to potential victims, as well as prosecuting offenders
5. Collaborative Response: develop a collaborative response to sexual exploitation between the police, community agencies, and government services
6. Sexual Exploitation Investigations: mandate the enforcement of sexual exploitation and provide the dedicated resources required to conduct collaborative, reactive, and proactive investigations, with consequences for non-compliance
7. Internet Child Exploitation: create two amalgamated provincial child exploitation units (located in St. John's and Corner Brook) with the mandate, training, and resources required to conduct proactive and reactive investigations, as well as to respond to related emerging issues
8. Law Enforcement Requests: ensure that telecommunication companies are required to comply with Law Enforcement Requests for IP addresses suspected of accessing child pornography
9. Judges: make it mandatory for judges to look at and hear all the evidence presented in trials involving child pornography and other forms of sexual exploitation
10. Court Venues: ensure all court proceedings in the province are held in respectful surroundings; in particular, stop the current practice of holding court in barrooms
11. Psychological Support: provide mandatory entry, maintenance, and exit debriefing to everyone in the justice system who is involved with evidence related to child pornography and sexual exploitation, and ensure this support is normalized within the workplace culture
12. Special Initiatives for Victims Office: establish an office within the Department of Justice responsible for the coordination and accountability of police, crown, probation, and victim services' responses to individuals who have experienced violence, including those who have been sexually exploited. The office would assist in the coordination of training and service development, research best practices, and inform both the Ministers' Committee and the Collaborative Committee

C. Prevention and Support

13. CASEY: provide organizational funding for an expanded provincial organization with three staff positions (Director, Public Education & Training Coordinator and Outreach Coordinator), and a mandate to:

- Develop working partnerships with all stakeholders, including government departments, agencies, and community organizations throughout the province
- Assist stakeholders to build capacity to respond to the issues
- Develop, coordinate, and deliver education to youth, parents, and service providers
- Coordinate skill development training for service providers, including counselors, social workers, educators, youth workers, and health care providers
- Research relevant issues, best practices, and program models
- Create an outreach team of agency staff and experiential peers that reaches out to and connects with youth who are sexually exploited and adults who are working in the sex trade. The team would assist individuals to navigate government and community services, including crisis intervention, harm reduction, food, housing, clothing, health care, income, and court support. Services would be non-judgmental, inclusive, respectful, culturally appropriate, accepting of chaos and diversity, and able to respond to emergency situations.

14. Collaborative Exiting Program: provide funding for a collaborative, peer driven, long-term program with a mandate to assist individuals with exiting the sex trade. The program would provide the following supports:

- Immediate emergency support
- Immediate emergency funds for relocation
- Peer support and peer counseling
- Trauma counseling
- Addictions support
- Pre-employment support
- Assistance in navigating mainstream services, programs, and supports

- Support would be available for the life of the individual and would be non-judgmental, inclusive, respectful, culturally appropriate, accepting of chaos and diversity, and able to respond to emergency situations

15. Workplace Protection: workplace health and safety regulations, and labour standards need to be applied to indoor sex trade businesses, including strip clubs, massage parlors and escort services.

16. Professional Education and Training

- Train current service providers, including social workers, counselors, health care providers, youth workers, addictions services, and educators in the skills required to identify and work with individuals who have been or are vulnerable to being sexually exploited
- Develop and implement curricula specific to sexual exploitation in relevant post-secondary faculties and programs, including police training, medical school, and schools of nursing, social work, education, and women's studies
- Ensure training materials are inclusive, culturally appropriate, and respectful of diversity

17. Department of Child, Youth and Family Services:

- Develop and implement a protocol to assess children and youth for sexual exploitation
- Develop and implement innovative outreach to youth who are sexually exploited
- Ensure that case planning for youth who have been or are at risk of being sexually exploited includes all appropriate supports specific to addressing sexual exploitation

18. Addictions Services

- Develop and implement a protocol to assess youth and adults for sexual exploitation
- Offer sexually exploited youth and adults in the sex trade with a choice of services designed to ensure their safety, including medical detox and out-of-province programming
- Incorporate programming modules specific to individuals in the sex trade within current addiction programs and counseling services

19. Health Care

- Enact legislation enabling access to anonymous STI/HIV testing
- Develop and implement a Street Nurse Program based on the BC Centre for Disease Control model
- Ensure health care providers are educated about sexual exploitation and have the skills to provide health care to exploited individuals in a sensitive and appropriate way
- Develop barrier-free health care services

20. Housing Choice

- Allow people to have a choice of where they live and sleep
- Provide individuals with a choice of emergency shelter options that can ensure their safety

21. Business and Industry

- Companies must take responsibility for the behaviour of the men they hire and change their workplace culture to eliminate sexual exploitation, particularly in Aboriginal communities.
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